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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted in selected Michigan elementary schools to determine the extent of implementation of seven Individually Guided Education (IGE) components. IGE is a program featuring individualized instruction of elementary school students and was developed by the Wisconsin Research and Development Center. The principals of fourteen IGE schools indicated the degree to which each of 71 activity statements distributed among the seven components were implemented in their IGE programs. The seven components examined were: (1) the multiunit elementary school organizational arrangement; (2) instructional programming; (3) instructional materials specifications; (4) measurement and evaluation items; (5) home-school relations; (6) a facilitative environment; and (7) research and development activities. Results of the study indicated that there was an adequate implementation (62 percent of the activity statements had been implemented) of the seven IGE components in the participating IGE schools. There were no significant differences found in the number of years the program had been in existence, or the amount of experience of the principal, and the degree of implementation of IGE components. Findings for each of the items are discussed. (JD)

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How Adequately Are the Components of Individually Guided Education Being Implemented?

Sr. Dorita Wotiska and Louis G. Romano

Educational reform has been a never-ending process. Reform issues have gone in many directions, hopefully improving the quality of education and improving teacher education.[1] Teachers and administrators usually want to implement within their education programs activities which are considered to be innovative. Team teaching is one good example, but unfortunately, team teaching in practice often deviates markedly from the conceptions supposedly underlying it. Many schools claiming to practice team teaching are nothing more than a systematic sharing of subjects among teachers.[2] Is this also true of schools that claim that they have implemented I.G.E. programs, but upon closer examination they are partially I.G.E. schools, or possibly only labeling the educational program?

Questions To Be Resolved

To answer this question a study[3] was conducted in selected Michigan school districts to determine the extent of implementation of seven I G E. components as defined by the Wisconsin Research and Development Center. The specific questions under study were as follows: (1) Are the Michigan elementary schools approaching adequate implementation of each of the seven components of I.G.E.? (2) Does the degree of implementation of each of the seven I.G.E. components scores vary significantly according to how long the school has been implementing I.G.E.? and (3) Does the degree of implementation of each of the seven

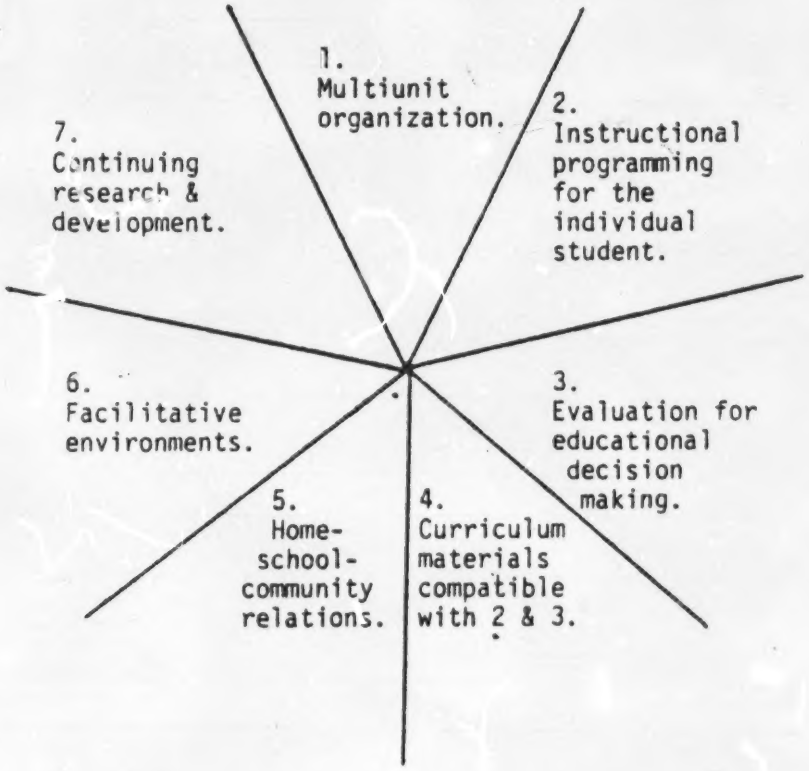
[1] Neal Gross, Joephy B. Giacauinta, and Marilyn Gernstein, Implementing Organization Innovations: A Sociological Analysis of Planned Educational Change (New York: Basic Books, 1971), pp. 21-30.

[2] John I. Goodlad, Facing the Future, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1976), pp. 110-111.

[3] Sister Dorita Wotiska, O.P., An Analysis of the Implementation of Seven Individually Guided Education Components in Selected Michigan School Districts, Un-

SP 018 955

I.G.E. component scores vary significantly according to how long each principal has administered the I.G.E. school? An additional concern of this study was to determine the extent there is consistency between the reported data from selected I.G.E. schools and the observations of the same schools.



Methods Used

From a population of thirty elementary IGE schools, fourteen chose to participate in this study. The Wisconsin IGE Implementation Survey was used in Michigan and consisted of 71 activity statements identified as representative characteristics of well implemented IGE programs. The 71 items were divided among the seven IGE components according to the following distribution: Multi-Unit Elementary School Organizational Arrangements (17 items), Instructional Programming (11 items), Materials (7 items), Measurement and Evaluation (15 items), Home-School-Community Relations (8 items), Facilitative Environments (10 items), and Research and Development (3 items).

For each process outcome the respondents were requested to indicate the degree to which the process outcome was implemented in the IGE program. A response continuum ranging from "No Implementation" to "Ideal Implementation" and a "Don't Know" alternative was operationally defined, and a scoring key was constructed. Assigned values for each were included for each statement (e.g., no implementation=1, some implementation=2, etc.). Seven subtotals were calculated to represent the seven IGE components. Principals within each school were asked to complete the survey tool.

Visitation of Schools

Besides the completion of the survey tool, six schools were randomly selected to visit and observe the IGE program. Two trained IGE implementors each visited three IGE schools. Both implementors showed consistency in their understanding of each of the seven components.

At least one-half day to a full day was spent in the observed IGE schools. The observer visited the classrooms, met with teams of teachers, and finally had a personal conference with the principal to discuss what was observed in the

classroom. Before this conference, the observer checked the survey form previously turned in by the principal, and checked in a red pencil those items which showed an inconsistency between the reported practice and the observed practice.

Presentation of Data

Research Question: Are the Michigan elementary IGE schools approaching adequate implementation of each of the seven components of IGE?

Component 1: The Multiunit Elementary School Organizational Arrangement (17 items)

In Component 1, eight of the components were "adequately" implemented and included: (1) Includes an instructional research unit, (5) Emphasizes shared decision making, (7) Employs a well defined model of accountability, (8) Emphasizes differentiated roles/staffing, (9) Uses a nongraded, multi-age arrangement for instruction, (10A) Employs a unit or lead teacher to coordinate the instruction and research, (10B) Employs 2-5 staff teachers plus a unit leader for each 100-150 students, and (10C) Employs one instructional aide for each 100-150 students.

The following items of Component 1 were "approach ideal" in their implementation: (2) Includes an instructional improvement committee (IIC), (6) Emphasizes open communication, and (11) Designates at least the building principal and the unit leaders to participate in the Instructional Improvement Committee (IIC).

The following items of Component 1 had "no" implementation in the IGE schools: (3) Includes a systemwide policy/planning committee (SPC), (10D) Employs one clerical aide for each 100-150 students, (10E) Uses one intern teacher for each 100-150 students (optional), (10F) Uses one student teacher for each 100-150 students (optional), (12) Designates the superintendent, building principal, central staff consultants and others to participate in the systemwide policy/planning committee (SPC), and (4) Participates in a league/network (PACT).

Component 2: Instructional programming (11 items)

In this component the following items were "adequately" implemented: (13) The instructional improvement committee sets broad schoolwide educational objectives, (15A) Level of skill development, (15B) Style of learning, (15C) Level of motivation, (16) Based on the results of the pre-assessment, behavioral/instructional objectives are developed which are appropriate to the individual needs of the students, (17) The instructional objectives are clearly communicated to the students, (18) Individualized instructional programs are designed to help the student attain his/her objectives, (19) Individual teaching techniques are modified to the variety of grouping patterns used, (20) A posttest is administered to determine how well each student achieves his/her objectives, and (21) The student's characteristics are reassessed and the students are placed in appropriate instructional sequence.

Only one component was implemented to "some" degree, (14) The instructional and research unit identifies a subset of specific instructional objectives for a given group of students.

Component 3: Materials (7 items)

In Component 3, the following items were "adequately" implemented: (22) A list or inventory of all available software and hardware materials in the school building is generated for review by the teachers, (24) The instructional staff select those materials which are appropriate for each student to attain the specific instructional objectives, (26) The instructional materials are placed with the school building so that they are easily accessible by the teacher and student, and (27) An IMC is established at the school.

The following items were found at the "some" implementation level: (23) The instructional staff or a representative committee of staff cross-referenced these materials to the broad schoolwide educational objectives, (25) The instructional staff are encouraged to develop teacher-made materials and the instructional materials already present, and (28) The instructional materials center is staff by certified personnel.

Component 4: Measurement and Evaluation (15 items)

In Component 4, all of the items except one were "adequately" implemented. These items included: (29A) Non-referenced tests, (29B) Criterion-referenced tests, (29C) Work sampling, (29D) Observation, (30A) Assesses the effect of instruction on student's achievement, (30B) Assesses the effect of instruction on student's attitudes, (31A) Assesses how well the IGE Program is delivered into the I & R unit, (31B) How well the IGE Program is implemented in the I & R unit, (32) Assesses the quality and utility of the instructional material, (33) Results in program improvement and modification, (34) Provides continuous feedback to individual students regarding progress made, (35) Provides continuous feedback to individual teacher to assist them in improving the instructional program, (36) Includes a systematic record-keeping system for each students, and (37) Allows for easy collection, storage, and retrieval of student data.

Only one item was implemented at "some" level, i.e., (31C) How well the IGE Program is coordinated among the multi-unit elementary school organizational levels, e.g., I & R unit, IIC, SPC, PACT.

Component 5: Home-School Relations (8 items)

In Component 5, four of the items were "adequately" implemented. They were (40) Have a well defined procedure for interpreting and reporting the student's progress and problems to parents, (41) Encourage the participation of community

volunteers in the instructional program, (42) Taps community resource persons to share their expertise as part of the instructional program, and (43) Encourage home-school visits by teachers and parents to discuss student performance.

The following items were implemented to "some" degree: (38A) Are coordinated by the IIC, (39) Have a well defined procedure for interpreting and reporting the student's progress and problems to the community, and (44) Include an evaluation component to determine effectiveness of home-school relations. Only item (38B) Are coordinated by the systemwide policy/planning committee (SPC), was not implemented.

Component 6: Facilitative Environment (10 items)

In Component 6, three of the items were "adequately" implemented. They included: (49) Providing a minimum of three hours a week during school, planning time for the I & R unit to coordinate their activities, (50) Encouraging the IIC to plan together on weekly basis, (53) Encouraging the staff to read the IGE materials and guidelines developed at Wisconsin R & D Center for Cognitive Learning and I/D/E/A, and (54) Encouraging staff to read other professional literature on teaching and learning.

Six of the items were implemented to "some" degree. They included: (45) Developing and implementing a series of workshops prior to opening of the school year to orient the staff to the multi-unit elementary school IGE program, (46) Encouraging unit leaders and principals to engage in leadership workshops to assist them in their role performance, (47) Developing and implementing locally sponsored workshops during the school year to assist staff in planning together effectively, (48) Seeking department of public instruction and university-based assistance in implementing IGE, (51) Encouraging staff to participate in university-based institutes or take academic courses in IGE, and (52) Participating in member school district league/network (PACT) activities for cooperating schools.

Only item 50, Encouraging the instructional improvement committee to plan together on a weekly basis, was implemented at the "approaching ideal" level.

Component 7: Research and Development (3 items)

Two of the items were implemented to the "some" degree and included: (56) Field testing newly developed/prepared curriculum materials for possible systemwide adoption and (57) Field testing innovative teaching techniques or learning programs for possible systemwide adoption. Only one item was adequately implemented, item 56, Identifying practical problems in implementing the IGE program and searching for answers to ameliorate them.

Summary of the seven components: Of the 71 items in the seven components, the following percentages were found: 62% (44 items) were "adequately" implemented; 23% (16 items) were implemented to "some" degree; 10 percent (7 items) were not implemented and only 4 items or 6 percent were "approaching ideal" in implementation. Of those items that were not implemented, they had to do with the school system's involvement with a district-wide planning arrangement or network of school districts, and the employment of clerical aides and the involvement of intern teachers and student teachers.

Based upon the data, the Michigan elementary IGE schools are approaching adequate implementation of each of the seven components of IGE.

Research Question: Is there a significant difference between the degree of implementation of each of the seven IGE component scores and how long the IGE program was implemented?

The majority of respondents, or seven, implemented IGE for a period of 4-5 years, while three schools implemented IGE for 1-3 years and four schools from 7-10 years. Regardless of the number of years there was no significant difference in the implementation in the 1-3, 4-6 and 7-10 year categories.

Table 1 --Summary of findings on the implementation of the seven IGE components and the number of years the IGE program was in operation.

Component	1-3 Years	4-6 Years	7-10 Years
1. Multiunit Elementary School Organizational Arrangement	Approaching Ideal	Approaching Ideal	Adequate
2. Instructional Programming	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate
3. Materials	Some	Adequate	Adequate
4. Measurement & Evaluation	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate
5. Home-School Relations	Some	Adequate	Some
6. Facilitative Environment	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate
7. Research & Development	Some	Adequate	None

Research Question: Is there a significant difference between the degree of implementation of each of the seven IGE component scores and how long each principal has administered in the IGE school?

In an examination of the data, it was found that a 1-3 year principal could implement IGE components as well or as poorly as a 4-6 year or a 7-10 year principal.

Research Question: Is there consistency between the reported data from the selected IGE schools and the observations of the same schools?

Of the 71 items, there were 17 items in which there was in inconsistency between the items checked on the survey tool and what was observed in the sample schools.

Specifically, the inconsistencies were as follows:

a. On items dealing with system-wide planning or planning between systems.

b. As to the meaning of the term "nongraded."

c. Where additional costs were involved, such as hiring clerical aides.

d. As to the use of the pre-test techniques in the instructional program.

e. On how individual teaching techniques can be modified to the variety of grouping patterns used in the classroom.

f. On how to cross-reference the materials of instruction to the broad school-wide educational objectives.

g. On what activities constituted teacher-made materials.

h. On the differences between norm-referenced and criterion referenced tests.

i. In the area of upgrading staff through pre-school workshops, consultative assistance, and university courses.

j. Field testing of curriculum materials and teaching techniques were not taking place in the observed schools.

Concluding Statement

Despite the data which showed that there is an adequate implementation of the seven components in the participating Michigan IGE schools, the observation of a sample of these schools showed far too many inconsistencies. It seems that these IGE schools do not have a clear picture of the various components of IGE. There is a need to assist IGE schools to understand the various components not only in terms of the concept, but how to evaluate those components.

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Dr. Louis Romano, Professor of Education, Michigan State University, has implemented IGE in more than sixty schools in Michigan and in places such as Okinawa, Mexico, and Brazil. He implemented the first IGE school in Michigan. Dr. Romano served on the Board of Directors of MAIGE since its inception.